leave betimes, let be.

A table prepared, Drums, Trumpets, and Officers with cushions, King, Queen, and all the state, foiles, daggers, and Laertes.

King. Come *Hamlet*, come, and take this hand from me.

Ham. Give me your pardon sir, I have done you wrong,
But pardon't as you are a Gentleman: this presence knowes,
And you must needs have heard how I am punisht
With a sore distraction; what I have done
That might your nature, honour, and exception
Roughly awake, I here proclaime was madnesse.
Was't *Hamlet* wrong'd *Laertes*? never *Hamlet*;
If *Hamlet* from himselfe be tane away,
And when hee's not himselfe does wrong *Laertes*,
Then *Hamlet* does it not, *Hamlet* denies it:
Who does it then? his madnesse: if't be so,
Hamlet is of the faction that is wronged,
His madnesse is poore *Hamlets* enemy;
Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evill
Free me so farre in your most generous thoughts,
That I have shot my arrow ore the house,
And hurt my brother.

Laer. I am satisfied in nature,
Whose motive in this case should stirre me most
To my revenge, but in my tearmes of honour
I stand aloofe, and will no reconcilement,
Till by some elder Masters of knowne honour
I have a voice and president of peace
To my name ungor'd: but all that time
I doe receive your offered love like love,
And will not wrong it.

Ha. I embrace it freely, and will this brothers wager
frankly play.
Give us the foiles.

Laer. Come, one for me.

Ham. Ile be your foile *Laertes*, in mine ignorance
Your skill shall like a starre i'th darkest night
Sticke fiery off indeed.

Laer. You mocke me sir.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE *Hamlet* (STC 22279) LONDON, 1637 THE BODLEIAN LIBRA